

## 2020 Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines: Process Summary

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The Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines (LDSG) were first developed in 2015 in order to provide Louisiana pediatric providers easy to interpret recommendations about what domains and tools to utilize in their practices. The LDSG are voluntary, but match the intentions of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) periodicity, which has been adopted by Louisiana Medicaid.



The guidelines were revisited in 2020 by the workgroup that created them to review and evaluate existing recommendations for domains and ensure that recommended tools were well-suited to fulfill the developmental screening needs of Louisiana children and families. The updates that were made are summarized in this document.

### Summary of Changes

- **Autism:** The developers of the original *Modified-Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT)* updated the tool to include a revised version that includes an immediate follow-up interview (*M-CHAT-R/F*) with algorithms and visual flow charts for scoring. The follow-up interview is designed to reduce the number of false positives and provide more information about presenting symptoms.
- **Perinatal Depression:** *Perinatal Depression* is now the language to represent what the AAP's periodicity refers to as *Maternal Depression Screening*. Although we use the term perinatal, we want to highlight the importance of screening for depression during the first year for birthing parents as well as other caregivers in the household. We recommend the *Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK)* as it assesses not only depression through its inclusion of the *Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)* items, but other concerns that may arise in the household. If a caregiver indicates experiences of depressed mood and anhedonia (positive for *PHQ-2* or the *PHQ-2* items within the *SEEK*), a self-report assessment of depression symptoms is recommended (and may be required by Managed Care Organizations or Private Insurers). As such, we also recommend the *Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)* as a follow-up to a positive *PHQ-2* (independent or within *SEEK*), or as the initial screening tool for Perinatal Depression.
- **Social Emotional:** Recommended tools list was shortened by replacing the full version of the *Early Childhood Screening Assessment (ECSA)* with the brief version (*Brief-ECSA*).
- **Barriers to Health/Family Wellness:** This domain was previously labeled *Social Determinants of Health* which has emerged as an important area of concern for pediatric providers, particularly within Louisiana. However, this language is being changed in favor of *Barriers to Health and Family Wellness* (for discussing with families) to use less jargon and emphasize that barriers can be removed or overcome with changes and support. Some providers may prefer the term *Family Wellness* has previously been used to discuss social determinants of health issues with families on occasion. Therefore, we encourage providers to use either the term *Barriers to Health* or *Family Wellness* when discussing topics such as food insecurity, housing, substance use, transportation, or violence within the home. In addition, we have also recommended the *Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children: Family Questions* to assess *Barriers to Health*. Last, we have expanded the recommended periodicity to include all times in which AAP recommends screening for depression in caregivers, and at yearly visits through age 5 years.

## Summary of Changes Table

Domain	Age in Months												Changes Made	
	1	2	4	6	9	12	18	24	30	36	48	60	Name Change	Tool Change
General Development														
Autism														+M-CHAT-R/F
Caregiver Well-being													Perinatal Depression	+PHQ-9 -ECSA
Social-Emotional														-PPSC and ECSA
Social Determinants of Health		+	+					+			+		Barriers to Health/ Family Wellness	+Survey Wellbeing Young Children

 AAP Periodicity
  LDSG

## The Update Process

The purpose of the 2020 update was to review and evaluate existing recommendations for domains and ensure that recommended tools were well-suited to fulfill the developmental screening needs of Louisiana children and families. The workgroup responsible reviewing and updating the LDSG consisted of clinicians (psychologists, early interventionists, social workers), subject matter experts in child development or adult and child mental health, and a Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician. The workgroup also consulted with professionals in leadership roles within state health departments and/or currently-practicing healthcare providers.

Criteria examined for the update of the guidelines included the following:

- **Name of the domain:** reduce jargon, eliminate stigma, and increase clarity.
- **Recommended periodicity:** revisit AAP and Medicaid surveillance and screening requirements.
- **Recommended tools:** select tools that demonstrated reliability and validity as indexed through sensitivity and specificity, are easily accessible, and affordable.

To ensure that tools were most appropriate for the children and families of Louisiana, the workgroup considered whether there was evidence to support the tool's utility in the Louisiana population through either prior utilization or evidence of successful use across racial and ethnic groups, urban and rural populations, across socioeconomic status, and had a reasonable reading level (e.g., 6<sup>th</sup> grade). Information about each tool's cost and available languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, and French) were considered during the initial recommendation process.



The workgroup examined the scientific literature on screening for each domain, prioritizing the most recent clinical and policy reports from the AAP. Based on evidence and workgroup discussions and expertise, recommendations were created or modified, then presented to the workgroup for a vote. Following the voting process, all changes to the LDSG were finalized and incorporated into public-facing materials and [trainings related to developmental screening](#).

## Important Considerations for the Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines

We recognize that the LDSG recommend tools may not be the only tools utilized in practice, but they have been found to be useful tools in Louisiana and meet the expectations of reliability and validity as laid out by the AAP. Other screening instruments may be used, so long as they are parent-reported tools with fidelity, that have been validated in samples similar to Louisiana. These recommendations are intended to represent the minimum amount of screening pediatric providers should conduct. If risk factors for any given concern are present, or if a parent expresses a concern, we endorse screening beyond what is outlined in the guidelines. Regardless of periodicity, referrals should be made to ensure children and families receive evaluation or intervention services for any concern that arises throughout the developmental screening process.

## Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines: Recommended Periodicity

Domain	Age in Months											
	1	2	4	6	9	12	18	24	30	36	48	60
General Development												
Autism												
Perinatal Depression												
Social-Emotional												
Barriers to Health												

 American Academy of Pediatrics Periodicity  
 Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines

## Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines: Recommended Instruments

Domain	Recommended Instruments
General Development	Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition (ASQ-3)
Autism	Modified-Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised w/Follow-up (M-CHAT-R)
Perinatal Depression	Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2), Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK)
Social Emotional	Brief-Early Childhood Screening Assessment (ECSA), Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional-2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition (ASQ:SE-2)
Barriers to Health	Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK), Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children: Family Questions

**We would like to thank the Louisiana Young Child Wellness Collaborative and the experts who contributed their time, knowledge, and effort to this update:** Patti Barovechio DNP, Susan Berry MD, Brittany Braun, Amanda Dumas MD MSc, Michelle Duplantier LCSW-BACS, Gina Easterly PhD, Meredith Eckard, Sarah Hinshaw-Fuselier PhD, Toni Ledet PhD, Anthony Luczak MSN APRN PMHS, Mia Orr White MHA, Kolynda Parker MHS, Ashley Politz MSW, Fiona Ritchey MPH, Brenda Sharp MA, and Laura Thornton PhD